SYLLABUS

Social Impact Assessment Methods

Academic year 2025-2026

1. Programme-related data

1.1. Higher education institution	"Babeș-Bolyai" University
1.2. Faculty	Faculty of Sociology and Social Work
1.3. Department	Sociology
1.4. Field of study	Sociology
1.5. Study cycle	Doctorate
1.6. Study programme/Qualification	Doctoral training / PhD in Sociology
1.7. Form of education	Full time

2. Course-related data

2.1. Name of the discipline	**Social Impact Assessment Methods**					Discipline code	SDR3121
2.2. Course coordinator					Prof. dr. Dan Chiribucă / Prof. dr. Mircea Comșa		
2.3. Seminar coordinator					Prof. dr. Dan Chiribucă / Prof. dr. Mircea Comșa		
2.4. Year of study	1	2.5. Semester	2	2.6. Type of evaluation	E	2.7. Discipline regime	Mandatory

3. Total estimated time (hours/semester of didactic activities)

3.1. Hours per week	**4**	of which: 3.2 course	**2**	3.3 seminar/laboratory	**2**
3.4. Total hours in the curriculum	48	of which: 3.5 course	24	3.6 seminar/laboratory	**24**
Time allotment for individual study (IS) and self-study activities (ST)					**hours**
Learning using manual, course support, bibliography, course notes (IS)					60
Additional documentation (in libraries, on electronic platforms, field documentation)					50
Preparation for seminars/labs, homework, papers, portfolios and essays					30
Tutorship					4
Evaluations					8
Other activities (Project writting)					50
3.7. Total individual study hours	**202**				
3.8. Total hours per semester	**250**				
3.9. Number of ECTS credits	**10**				

4. Prerequisites (if necessary)

4.1. curriculum	-
4.2. competencies	-

5. Conditions (if necessary)

5.1. for the course	PC, projector, Internet
5.2. for the seminar /lab activities	PC, projector, Internet

6.1. Specific competencies acquired

Professional / essential competencies	CP2 – Ability to identify, formulate, and creatively solve research problems CP3 – Mastery of advanced research methods and techniques
Transversal competencies	CT1 – Written and oral communication skills in the fields of science and culture CT8 – Knowledge of critical thinking and the analysis of reasoning

6.2. Learning outcomes

Knowledge	CP2 1. Knows methods and techniques for identifying and formulating problems. 2. Understands the criteria of relevance and originality of scientific problems. CP3 1. Knows advanced research methods and techniques, both theoretical and experimental. 2. Understands the scientific methodology applied in their field. CT1 1. Knows the rules of oral and written scientific communication. 2. Understands the structure of scientific presentations and articles. CT8 1. Knows the concepts of critical thinking and logical reasoning. 2. Understands methods for data analysis and interpretation.
Skills	CP2 1. Formulates original problems and proposes creative solutions. 2. Applies innovative methods to address identified problems. CP3 1. Designs and applies sophisticated methods to investigate problems. 2. Uses techniques for data processing and interpretation. CT1 1. Writes and presents scientific information coherently. 2. Adapts communication to the audience. CT8 1. Analyzes and interprets complex problems. 2. Formulates logical and well-argued reasoning.
Responsibility and autonomy:	CP2 1. Takes responsibility for the quality and impact of solutions. 2. Works autonomously in defining research directions. CP3 1. Makes autonomous decisions regarding the selection and adaptation of methods. 2. Takes responsibility for the accuracy of the procedures applied. CT1 1. Takes responsibility for the clarity and accuracy of communication. 2. Works autonomously in preparing materials. CT8 1. Works autonomously in the critical evaluation of results. 2. Takes responsibility for the justification of decisions.

7. Objectives of the discipline (outcome of the acquired competencies)

7.1 General objective of the discipline	Familiarizing students with the methods and techniques used in social research. Presentation of the main theoretical and practical aspects associated with the quantitative and qualitative methodologies used in conducting social impact assessment studies, focusing on highlighting the specifics of these approaches, the advantages and limitations specific to each method. Presentation and commentary of specific examples of the use of social impact assessment methods in current social research. The didactic component is doubled by an applicative purpose, the students having the obligation to carry out a research project in which to use at least one of the topics discussed in the course. It is preferable (but not mandatory) that the topic of the research project be related to the topic of the doctoral thesis.
7.2 Specific objective of the discipline	A. Cognitive objectives - knowledge of the main theoretical perspectives that underpin empirical research in the social sciences; - knowledge of the main methods used in social impact assessment studies; - understanding the advantages and limitations specific to the main methods used in impact studies; - understanding the principles underlying the design and implementation of social impact assessment research; - understanding the principles underlying the implementation of research tools; - knowledge and adequate use of concepts, terms and notions specific to the field; - critical commentary of the methods and tools used in the realization of concrete projects; - explaining and interpreting the methodological options corresponding to concrete research approaches. B. Instrumental-applicative objectives - developing the capacity to operationalize concepts and translate them into research tools; - developing the capacity to define the methodology of an impact assessment study based on given research questions; - developing the capacity to critically evaluate the methods and tools used in conducting concrete research; - developing the capacity to carry out research tools (questionnaire, interview guide, content analysis grid, sample) and to collect quantitative data using specific tools. C. Attitudinal objectives - developing the interest towards the scientific knowledge of the social reality; - developing responsibility for the ethical implications and social consequences of social research; - developing a positive attitude towards the social utility of the scientific investigation of the social; - developing the interest towards the creative capitalization of the individual potential in the scientific investigation of the social.

8. Content

8.1. Course	**Teaching and learning methods**	**Remarks**
1. Introduction to the subject of discipline. Presentation of the theme and objectives. Presentation of bibliographic resources. Presentation of the requirements regarding the students' activities during the semester and of the evaluation criteria.	Presentation, explanation, discussion, case studies, exercises	
2. Social impact: conceptualization, definitions. Types of effects and consequences of social intervention projects.		
3. Principles of comparative research. Advantages, problems and limitations of comparative design.		
4-5. Design of social impact assessment research: stages, questions, units of analysis, choice of indicators and criteria for their evaluation, specific issues.		
6. Sampling methods and strategies used in impact assessment studies: random sampling vs theoretical sampling; specific aspects, advantages and limitations.		

7. Qualitative methods used in monitoring and evaluation studies: interview, focus group, case studies. Defining attributes, relevant topics, specifics, validity, advantages and limitations.		
8. Quantitative methods used in monitoring and evaluation studies: survey, experiment, structured observation. Defining attributes, relevant topics, specifics, validity, advantages and limitations.		
9-10. Integrative data collection strategies: data sources and types, practical aspects regarding the implementation of field activities.		
11-12. The main types of design used in social impact assessment studies: randomization, propensity score matching, double difference, instrumental variables, regression discontinuity		
Bibliography: Becker, H. A. (1997). Social impact assessment-Method and experience in Europe, North America and the developing world. Babbie, E. (2013). The Practice of Social Research. Wadsworth. Becker, H. A., & Vanclay, F. (Eds.). (2003). The international handbook of social impact assessment: Conceptual and methodological advances. Edward Elgar Publishing. Bloom, P. N., & Skloot, E. (Eds.). (2010). Scaling social impact: New thinking. Palgrave Macmillan. Chapters 7, 10, 12. Bryman, Alan. (2012), Social Research Methods, Oxford University Press Gertler, P. J., Martinez, S., Premand, P., Rawlings, L. B., & Vermeersch, C. M. (2016). Impact evaluation in practice. World Bank Publications. Khandker, S. R., Koolwal, G. B., & Samad, H. A. (2010). Handbook on Impact Evaluation: Quantitative Methods and Practices. World Bank Publications.		

8.2. Seminar/ laboratory	**Teaching and learning methods**	**Remarks**
Case studies prepared with the doctoral students, based on their individual doctoral research topics	Presentation, discussion, exercises	
Bibliography: Becker, H. A. (1997). Social impact assessment-Method and experience in Europe, North America and the developing world. Babbie, E. (2013). The Practice of Social Research. Wadsworth. Becker, H. A., & Vanclay, F. (Eds.). (2003). The international handbook of social impact assessment: Conceptual and methodological advances. Edward Elgar Publishing. Bloom, P. N., & Skloot, E. (Eds.). (2010). Scaling social impact: New thinking. Palgrave Macmillan. Chapters 7, 10, 12. Bryman, Alan. (2012), Social Research Methods, Oxford University Press Gertler, P. J., Martinez, S., Premand, P., Rawlings, L. B., & Vermeersch, C. M. (2016). Impact evaluation in practice. World Bank Publications. Khandker, S. R., Koolwal, G. B., & Samad, H. A. (2010). Handbook on Impact Evaluation: Quantitative Methods and Practices. World Bank Publications.		

9. Corroborating the content of the discipline with the expectations of the epistemic community, professional associations and representative employers within the field of the program

- The content of the discipline aims to form a theoretical and applied basis for social research.
- In the development of the discipline, the most recent theoretical and empirical achievements were considered both in the international literature, but also in Romania.

10. Evaluation

Activity type	10.1 Evaluation criteria	10.2 Evaluation methods	10.3 Percentage in the final grade
10.4 Course	Research project	Discussions, answers to questions	50%
10.5 Seminar/laboratory	Activity during seminars	Discussions, answers to questions	50%
10.6 Minimum standard for passing			
• Active participation in at least two practical activities.			

11. Labels ODD (Sustainable Development Goals)

	General label for Sustainable Development							
								

Date of entry:
2026.02.11

Signature of course coordinator

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Signature of seminar coordinator

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Date of approval in the department:

Signature of the head of department

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